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THE GUIDE

Continued from Page E15

Opus Members of a world-renowned string quartet struggle to prepare for a high-profile performance at the White House when their brilliant but unstable violinist disappears mysteriously. Simon Levy directs. Fountain Theatre, 5060 Fountain Ave., Hollywood. Sat., 8 p.m.; next Sun., 2 p.m.; ends July 25. $25-$35. (323) 663-2235.

Hepburn Sings! Kevin Dukate portrays Katharine Hepburn in a musical journey through the actress' life. Mayflower Club, 11110 Victory Blvd., North Hollywood. Sat., 8 p.m.; next Sun., 2 p.m. $10-$25. (818) 769-0605.

Love, Sex and Violence Too Pavel Cerny directs a cast of 12 in six new one-acts about relationships by Czech playwright Helena Weltman. Part of the inaugural Hollywood Fringe Festival. Flight Theatre at the Complex, 6476 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood. Next Sun., noon; ends June 27. $20. (866) 811-4111.

Unbuttoned Andreas Beckett performs the premiere of his solo show, an autobiographical musical dramedy about his quest for love, one woman at a time. Part of the inaugural Hollywood Fringe Festival. The Lounge Theatre, 6201 Santa Monica Blvd., L.A. Next Sun., 2 p.m.; ends June 27. $15. (866) 811-4111.

Steve Allen's Meeting of Minds Ray Abruzzo (as Voltaire), Harold Gould (as Plato), Mark Moses (as Martin Luther), Jean Smart (as Florence Nightingale) and Jack Maxwell (as Steve Allen) perform a staged reading inspired by Allen's 1970s PBS talk show. Steve Allen Theater, 4773 Hollywood Blvd., L.A. Next Sun., 7 p.m. $30-$50. (323) 856-3605.

Critics' Choices

The Arsonists Alistair Beaton's rousing new interpretation of Max Frisch's droll masterwork stresses the comically deadly plight of a mild-mannered man whose failure to acknowledge the presence of evil is, in itself, the ultimate evil. Ron Sossi's sprightly staging straddles the psychic divide between the hilarious and the horrific (F.K.F.). Odyssey Theatre Ensemble, 2055 S. Sepulveda Blvd., West L.A. Today and next Sun., 2:30 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; ends June 26. $25-$30. (310) 477-2055.

Fabulation, or the Re-Education of Undine Lynn Nottage's rueful comedy follows the downward mobility of Undine, a slick African American PR guru who is forced to move back in with her working-class family after she goes bankrupt. Well-paced and ebullient, this West Coast Ensemble production is driven by a full-throttle performance from Adeye Sahran as Undine (C.B.). The Lounge Theatre, 6201 Santa Monica Blvd., L.A. Today, 3 p.m.; ends today. $20. (800) 595-4849.

Life Could Be a Dream Writer-director Roger Bean ("The Marvelous Wonderettes") outdoes his own winning formula with this charming 1960s jukebox musical about a quartet of guys (and one girl) angling to win a big radio talent contest (F.K.F.). Hudson Mainstage Theatre, 6539 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood. Today, 3 p.m.; Thu.-Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 3 and 8 p.m.; next Sun., 3 p.m.; ends next Sun. $45-$47.50. (323) 960-4412.

Love, Loss and What I Wore Nora and Delia Ephron's stage adaptation of Ilene Beckerman's sweet sartorial memoir is an evening of monologues. Nothing too demanding here, just the kind of affirming chick outing that makes you want to rip off your Spanx and have another cosmo (C.B.). The current cast features Lucy DeVito, Conchata Ferrell, Rhea Perlman, Justina Machado and Nancy Travis. Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at the Geffen Playhouse, 10886 Le Conte Ave., Westwood. Today and next Sun., 2 and 7 p.m.; Tue.-Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 3 and 8 p.m.; ends July 4. $69-$74. (310) 208-5454.

The Marriage of Figaro A shrewd use of artifice as content distinguishes Frédérique Michel and Charles Duncombe's new adaptation of Beaumarchais' 1784 assault on the aristocracy, the source of Mozart's deathless opera. Director Michel and designer Duncombe use the conventions of farce to strike more profound cultural targets, sending the stalwart cast pirouetting around with calibrated panache (D.C.N.). City Garage, 1340½ 4th St. Alley, Santa Monica. Today and next Sun., 5:30 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; ends next Sun. $25. Pay what you can on Sundays. (310) 319-9939.

More Lies About Jerzy A thinly fictionalized account of the pyrotechnical rise and sputtering fall of author Jerzy Kosinski, Davey Holmes' neatly meta-theatrical drama examines the sometimes cannibalistic nature of creativity. In the title turn, Jack Stehlin is, quite simply, luminescent (F.K.F.). Hayworth Theatre, 2509 Wilshire Blvd., L.A. Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; ends July 31. $25. (323) 960-7788.

Road to Saigon By giving three performers — Joan Almedilla, Jennifer Paz and Jenni Selma — who have played the lead role in "Miss Saigon" free reign to merge their stories, director Jon Lawrence Rivera creates an ineluctable entertainment. The trio's spectacular vocals are self-evident, their mutual regard an undiluted treat to witness. Don't miss it (D.C.N.). David Henry Hwang Theater, 120 N. Judge John Aiso St., L.A. Today, 2 p.m.; ends today. $40-$50. (213) 625-7000.

Supernova Tireless writer-actor Timothy McNeil runs kitchen-sink realism through a post-millennial viewfinder, with remarkable albeit still gestating results. As the unappreciated Iowa homemaker heroine, McNeil's wife, Bonnie, is transcendent. Lindsay Allbaugh stages this parabolic study with simplicity and point, aided by a crack design team and an invested cast (D.C.N.). The Elephant Space, 6322 Santa Monica Blvd., L.A. Today and next Sun., 7 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; ends June 27. $20. (323) 960-4410.

GALLERIES

Reviews by Sharon Mizota (S.M.) and Leah Ollman (L.O.). Compiled by Grace Krilanovich.

Critics' Choices

Alice Neel: Paintings Over six decades, Neel (1900-1984) painted her lovers, children and grandchildren, friends, fellow artists and activists, and strangers who intrigued her. This show of 15 portraits, dating from 1940-1978, is a prized opportunity, the first time so many of Neel's works have been on view together in L.A. in over 20 years. Each image is an invitation into the domain of both sitter and artist, to their psychic and physical shared space. In nearly every canvas, that space feels alive, dynamic, charged with emotional depth and formal energy (L.O.). LA Louver, 45 N. Venice Blvd., Venice. Tue.-Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; ends June 26. (310) 822-4955.

Continuing

Marie Jager: The Big Nowhere Jager's images may be the quietest environmental art ever. The canvases and blueprints, which the L.A. artist creates by simply leaving them outside, are literally "painted" by gravity, pollution and rain. They look like abstract paintings, a genre that has often given shape to the invisible, but their environmental message stems precisely from what they are: direct evidence (S.M.). Kunsthalle LA, 932 Chung King Road, L.A. Wed.-Sun., noon-6 p.m.; ends Sat. (323) 221-1800.

Scott Short The artist's large, striking paintings derive from a process that marries the mechanical and the handcrafted. Short starts with a piece of colored construction paper, makes a black-and-white photocopy of it, then another and another, until the pocks and patterns on one of the copies captivates him. He then projects a slide of it onto canvas and meticulously paints its every detail. The results are both gorgeous and inane, superficial and sophisticated — in that insular art-world way that validates exercising even the slightest concept to exhaustion. What hath Xerox wrought? (L.O.) Christopher Grimes Gallery, 916 Colorado Ave., Santa Monica. Tue.-Sat., 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.; ends Sat. (310) 587-3373.

MUSEUMS

Reviews by Christopher Knight (C.K.), Sharon Mizota (S.M.) and Leah Ollman (L.O.). Compiled by Grace Krilanovich.

Critics' Choices

Leonardo da Vinci and the Art of Sculpture: Inspiration and Invention The first Da Vinci exhibition in L.A. in nearly three decades focuses on the work he didn't do: sculpture. There are statues created by Da Vinci's role models, teachers and colleagues, but no surviving works that can be definitively attributed to him. Instead the show reconsiders his drawings as a form of mental sculpture, a tantalizing idea that comes together, like Da Vinci's sculptures, only in one's head (S.M.). Getty Center, 1200 Getty Center Drive, L.A. Tue.-Fri. and Sun., 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; closed Mon.; ends next Sun. (310) 440-7300.

Continuing

Diana Al-Hadid In her first solo museum show, Al-Hadid fills the Hammer's lobby gallery with an installation equal parts romantic poetry and mechanical engineering. "Water Thief" was inspired by a 13th century Syrian water clock, and more generally by a spirit of invention and architectural aspiration rooted in the past. Its diffuse chaos of fossilized spires, gears, channels and wheels has a curious beauty. It presents itself as a remnant of material history, invoking the texture of time and reveling in the sensuality of ruin and decay (L.O.). Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood. Tue.-Wed., Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-7 p.m.; Thu., 11 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed Mon.; ends Aug. 15. (310) 443-7000.

Andrew Lord: between my hands to water falling, selected works from 1990 to 2010 This gorgeous show includes 87 mostly ceramic sculptures from five series, plus a short video. Most any clay vessel has a mouth, lip, neck, body and foot, and the use of bodily terminology is not accidental. Lord uses his body, as well as his hands, to push, squeeze and mold the vessels. The forms can appear crude on initial encounter, but they grow sophisticated, even elegant, the longer you linger. Rips, tears and breaks that occur as the vessels are being made, glazed and fired in a kiln are patched with epoxy covered in gold leaf. These repairs, aside from the visual sensuality of the liquid gold splashes, have a metaphoric aspect: Bodily wear and tear rather than being seen as a compendium of flaws is consecrated by them, blessed with a measure of respect. Think worldly stigmata, without any religious associations but overflowing with the scarred knowledge of hard-lived corporeal experience (C.K.). Santa Monica Museum of Art, Bergamot Station, 2525 Michigan Ave., Building G1, Santa Monica. Tue.-Sat., 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; closed Sun.-Mon.; ends Aug. 21. (310) 586-6488.

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